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This issue of THE ORTHODOX WORD *is dedicated to the blessed memory of our beloved and holy Archpastor,*
ARCHBISHOP JOHN MAXIMOVITCH

HOLINESS IS NOT SIMPLY RIGHTEOUSNESS, for which the righteous merit the enjoyment of blessedness in the Kingdom of God, but rather such a height of righteousness that men are filled with the grace of God to the extent that it flows from them upon those who associate with them Great is their blessedness; it proceeds from personal experience of the Glory of God. Being filled also with love for men, which proceeds from love of God, they are responsive to men's needs, and upon their supplication they appear also as intercessors and defenders for them before God.

Archbishop John Maximovitch

ST. JOHN, METROPOLITAN OF TOBOLSK
1651-1715

Memorial icon dedicated to the late Archbishop John Maximovitch,
Holy Virgin Cathedral, San Francisco

ST. JOHN MAXIMOVITCH OF TOBOLSK

The first account in English of a true prince of the Church: noble hierarch, great ascetic, God-inspired poet, educator, missionary, friend of the poor: Imperial Russia's last canonized Saint.

THE GREAT Caves Monastery of Kiev was, from the earliest years of Orthodox Christianity in Russia, a fount of sanctity for the whole of the Russian land. The Monastery was destroyed in the Tartar invasion of the 13th century; but it was later restored, and again in the 17th century it entered upon a period of spiritual blossoming that produced a whole series of holy hierarchs. Among them, to name only the closest contemporaries and associates of St. John, were St. Dimitry of Rostov (1651-1709), St. Theodosius of Chernigov (1630-1696), and Blessed Philotheus of Tobolsk (d. 1727); slightly later there were such holy men as St. Innocent of Irkutsk (1680-1731), St. Ioasaph of Belgorod (1705-1754), and St. Paul of Tobolsk (1705-1770). In this company of hierarch-saints, St. John of Tobolsk occupies his own significant place.

A member of the noble family of Maximovitch, which enjoyed high favor with the Russian Tsars, St. John was born, one of six brothers, in the year 1651 in the city of Nezhin in central Russia. Already in his childhood he was particularly fond of reading the word of God and the writings of the Holy Fathers, and he loved to attend the services of the Church. This strong religious inclination in his early youth determined the whole of his later life.

The future hierarch was educated in the Kievan College of Metropolitan Peter Mogila, which was later transformed into a Theological Academy. There he learned to love theological studies, to which he gave himself with all the ardor of youth, and he finished the course brilliantly. He remained to teach there for eight years, showing himself an industrious scholar and a deeply religious man. At the same time, from his visits to the Caves Monastery in Kiev, there was planted in him a burning desire for the monastic life, and it was there that he became a monk. In the Lavra the young ascetic revealed himself as highly gifted in letters and in the art of oratory. When in 1677 the Turks were threatening to attack the Ukraine, the then Hieromonk John was chosen by the monks, despite his youth, as their envoy to Tsar Feodor Alexeyevich to ask for help in the face of the threatened destruction of the Lavra. The Tsar sent a strong detachment and designated Svensky Monastery near Bryansk to be the place of refuge for the monks of the Lavra in case of attack, and Hieromonk John was appointed its abbot. This brought out the humble ascetic from the holy caves of Kiev and placed him high on the Church candlestick to shine before men. For the next twenty years Fr. John was placed at the head of various monasteries in southern Russia, inspiring the monks by his personal example and great ascetic endeavor. The holy life and great talents of Abbot John soon came to the attention of St. Theodosius, Archbishop of Chernigov. St. Theodosius (Ouglitsky) was a model hierarch and Orthodox enlightener full of flaming love and devotion to his flock. After his death he manifested his greatness before God with an abundance of miraculous intercessions coming from his incorruptible relics. He called St. John with the idea of making him his successor in Chernigov. In 1695 he made him Archimandrite of Eletsky Monastery, of which he had himself once been the head.

In the next year, 1696, St. Theodosius died, but his closeness to his chosen successor did not end with his death; for St. John himself received the first miraculous healing by the prayers of St. Theodosius. To St. John, who was seriously ill with influenza and apparently on his deathbed, St. Theodosius appeared and said: "Do not sorrow, brother; the Lord has heard your prayers, and you will be well. Rise from your bed and prepare to serve the Divine Liturgy; this will be a sign to you." Awakening after the vision, the Saint had his vicar informed that he would serve on the following day. Because of his condition, these words were ascribed to delirium. But in fact, on the following day the Saint,

already well, served the Liturgy. After this healing St. John ordered the cave opened where St. Theodosius was buried, and he hung there a large portrait of his healer, himself composing some verses for an inscription.

St. John being the logical successor to St. Theodosius, he was unanimously elected Archbishop of Chernigov by the local clergy and officials, and sent to Moscow with a request of the Tsar and Patriarch to consecrate him for Chernigov. The consecration took place on January 10, 1697.

St. Theodosius of Chernigov

Chernigov was a flourishing city not far from Kiev. St. Theodosius had seen well to the Orthodox enlightenment and education of his diocese, and St. John, his worthy successor, took up this task where that great Saint had left off. St. John understood well that for fruitful results in Church life more was needed than his own personal efforts, and so he worked to educate the clergy. For this purpose he established a diocesan college, similar to the Kievan Academy, which was to become, according to the Saint's idea, a "Chernigovan Athens" of enlightened piety. The high level of its theological education and its instruction in the rules of Christian living made this school widely known. It became a pattern, in imitation of which seminaries began to be opened in other dioceses.

St. John strove always to live the life of his flock. He taught the truths of Christian faith and life in a form accessible to the simplest of his listeners, and he pointed to the grace-bestowing powers of the Holy Church, which aid one to stand firmly on the path of salvation.

The high virtues with which the life of St. John was radiant were reflected also in his many writings, a list of which follows: 1 *The Mirror of Moral Instruction*, 1703 and 1707; 2 *Alphabet of Saints* (in verse), 1705; 3 *O Mother of God, Virgin* (also in verse), 1707; 4 *Commentary on the 50th Psalm*, 1708; 5 *A Meditation on the Prayer 'Our Father'* (in verse), 1709; 6 *The Eight Beatitudes of the Gospel* (in verse), 1709; 7 *The Royal Way of the Cross*, 1709; 8 *Religious Reflections*, 1710-11; 9 *Iliotropion*, 1714 (all published in Chernigov).

His most important work, *Iliotropion*, was begun by St. John while he was still a teacher in the Academy of Peter Mogila. He published it in Latin, and only later, in Tobolsk, when he had completed it in its final form, did he publish it in Slavonic. The title is the Greek word for helianthus (sunflower). The image of the sunflower, dear to the Saint even from his youth, was for him an analogy which helps to explain the agreement of the human will with the will of God. The sunflower has the particular characteristic of daily turning its face from one side to the other following the movement of the sun. Sunflowers are a common sight in the rural landscape of southern Russia, and St. John could not but be attracted by the natural symbolism they afford. The book *Iliotropion*, in fact, treats of the Divine and human wills:

"The only true means for attaining our happiness in this life and in the next is the constant turning of our attention within ourselves, to our own conscience, to our thoughts, words, and deeds, so as to raise them to passionlessness: this will reveal to us our mistakes in life and indicate the only path to salvation. This path is the entire devotion of our whole being, of our whole self with all the circumstances of our life, to the will of God. As a symbol of this our turning to God we may take the growth of the sunflower; let it be ever before our eyes.

"Christian! Observe once and for all how the sunflower even on gloomy days pursues its circular course, following the sun with the unchanging love and attraction natural to it. Our sun, illuminating our path through this world, is the will of God; it does not always illuminate our path in life without clouds; often clear days are followed by gloomy ones: rain, wind, storms arise... But let our love for our Sun, the will of God, be so strong that we may continue, inseparably from it, even in days of misfortune and sorrow, like the sunflower on gloomy days, to navigate faultlessly on the sea of life, following the indications of the 'barometer' and 'compass' of the will of God, which leads us into the safe harbor of eternity."

In the words of this ascetic of faith there is placed before us the spiritually transfigured man, filled with the determination to accept in all things the will, good and perfect, of the Heavenly Father. "It will seem to us that we are deprived of everything; even if we have a great abundance in everything, we will always be in fear, despondent, agitated, faint-hearted, every hour full of cares and various anxieties, sorrow and vain sighing, until we sincerely return to God and devote ourselves and each other completely to the will of God, as the sunflower strives toward

the sun. Let us begin diligently to examine the visible signs of God's will in events and conform our will to them. Let the will of God be for us the guiding star in life, and let each of us engrave and hold forever in his heart this one thing: *Blessed be the Name of the Lord!*" (Job, ch. 1.)

In 1700 Tsar Peter I ordered the Metropolitan of Kiev to select a suitable candidate for the mission of preaching the Gospel to the pagan peoples of the vast Siberian lands. Two of St. John's close schoolmates were chosen for this task, being assigned to the rapidly-growing Siberian diocese of Tobolsk. The first choice was St. Dimitry Tuptulo, who, however, due to his frail health was never sent to Tobolsk but to Rostov; in his place Blessed Philotheus Leschinsky was made Metropolitan and sent to Tobolsk, and his zeal, his ascetic life, and his love for the natives earned for him recognition as one of Russia's greatest missionaries. In 1709 Metropolitan Philotheus became sick and, thinking his end near, took the skhima and retired to private ascetic labors. His friend St. John was called to succeed him in the Tobolsk cathedra.

Metropolitan Philotheus of Tobolsk

In Chernigov St. John had by this time earned the unquestioning respect and love of his flock, being known as a great man of prayer and an outstanding prince of the Church. He was adorned also with supernatural gifts, such as the ability to see the future; he predicted Tsar Peter's victory over the Swedes, and in the Tobolsk Chronicles it is recorded that he foresaw the Napoleonic invasion a century in advance.

In the middle of the year 1711 St. John left Chernigov with its culture to bring the light of Christianity to the cold and primitive Siberian frontier. For his protection he took with him a copy of a miraculous Chernigov Icon of the Mother of God, that of Ilyin, which only several decades before had manifested the rare miracle of tears, and had granted since then numerous miraculous healings.[1] He arrived in the middle of August in the same year with a great suite: church singers, educated clergymen, episcopal vestments, service books, together with

1. See *The Orthodox Word*, vol. 1, no. 6, p. 220.

many trunks. He at once gained the respect and admiration of all and was able without difficulties to apply himself to missionary endeavors.

Always a friend of education, St. John took loving care of the Slavano-Latin School established by his predecessor. He established courses in icon painting. He took charge of local missionary work, freeing the Skhima-Metropolilan Philotheus to preach Christ to the wild tribes farther away. He sent a well-equipped mission to Peking.[1]

St. John loved to do good in secret; he sent money and various objects through trustworthy persons to poorhouses and the homes of poor people, especially widows. He would go to a window, knock, and say: "Accept this in the Name of Jesus Christ" -- and quickly leave. He grieved especially over impoverished clergymen. He was drawn with his whole soul to wherever there were sorrow and need. He loved to go to prisons; he comforted, taught, and likewise diverted the prisoners with gifts. He never went out just to visit, and he never stepped into the houses of the rich.

Even while occupied with his many pastoral cares, St. John managed to lead also a life of the strictest asceticism. In his personal life he was quiet, humble, compassionate, and very strict with himself. Possessing a great capacity for work, he was never idle; he was always reading or writing, teaching or thinking. Above all he prayed; shutting himself up in his cell, he would pray for hours on his knees.

For his God-pleasing deeds, St. John was granted a righteous death that revealed the sanctity of his earthly life. Foreseeing his approaching death, he prepared for it: the evening before, he went to confession, and the next day, June 10, 1715, he solemnly celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Afterwards, as was his custom on major feast days, he held a dinner in his quarters for the city clergymen and the poor. He himself waited on the latter, thus literally obeying the Gospel injunction: *When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just* (St. Luke 14: 13-14).

After the dinner the Saint touchingly bade farewell to his clergy, and then detained for a short time two of his best-loved priests. What he said to them was never divulged. Having dismissed them, he closed himself into his inner quarters. Before vespers, when it was customary to ask the Metropolitan's blessing for the ringing of the bells, his house

1. Interestingly enough, the largest and most active center of Orthodoxy in China two centuries later was headed by the Saint's relative, John Maximovitch, Bishop of Shanghai, whose life and activity strikingly resemble St. John's. See article following.

servants came many times to his quarters, knocked and called him; but the door was not opened, and they heard no voice. The residents of Tobolsk, who deeply revered and loved the Metropolitan, did not hear the vesper bells at the usual time; and having been thrown into perplexity by the tales that quickly spread through the city about the entirely extraordinary farewell of St. John with his clergy, they gathered in large numbers in the enclosure before the bishop's house. Finally the Siberian governor, Prince Gagarin, arrived and, after renewed vain attempts to call the Metropolitan, he took the responsibility upon himself and ordered the door broken in. And they beheld: Metropolitan John, in an attitude of prayer, was on his knees before the holy Icon of the Chernigov Mother of God -- already long dead.

The Chernigov Icon

His death was supernaturally revealed to his beloved brother in Christ. On the same day Blessed Philotheus, being miles away in the wild regions of the Konda River, said to those who surrounded him: "Our brother John has passed away. Let us go from here"; and he at once returned to Tobolsk.

The Saint was buried in his cathedral to the great lamentation of his flock. But immediately a series of visions and miraculous intercessons followed, so that there was no doubt of his sanctity; and Tobolsk patiently waited for the day of his canonization. This took, however, 200 years, and even then it was almost postponed because of the First World War. It took the ardent intercession of the local Bishop Varnava, the future Patriarch Tikhon, and the Martyr-Tsar Nicholas II to bring about the long expected canonization, which took place on June 10, 1916, in the presence of all the Siberian hierarchs and tens of thousands of Orthodox believers from all over Holy Russia. It was the last canonization before the Satanic Revolutionary storm broke.

The incorruptible relics of St. John are said to be still preserved in Tobolsk today.

GREAT ORTHODOX HIERARCHS OF THE 19TH & 20TH CENTURIES

ARCHBISHOP JOHN MAXIMOVITCH

1896 - 1966

ARCHBISHOP JOHN MAXIMOVITCH

1896 - 1966

BARELY SIX MONTHS ago there reposed in the Lord a hierarch of the Church of Christ whose life so extraordinarily radiated the Christian virtues and the grace of the Holy Spirit as to make of him a pillar of true Orthodoxy and an example of Christian life that is of universal significance. In Archbishop John there were united three kinds of the highest Christian activity that are rarely found together: that of a bold and esteemed Prince of the Church; an ascetic in the tradition of the pillar-saints, taking upon himself the severest self-mortification; and a fool for Christ's sake, instructing men by a "foolishness" that was beyond the wisdom of this world.

The following account cannot begin to be called a complete life of Archbishop John; it is only a selection of the material that is already available, presented in the form of a preliminary sketch of the life of this holy man. It was compiled by the Father Herman Brotherhood, which was organized with the blessing of Archbishop John (who wished to see Father Herman canonized after Father John of Kronstadt) for the mission of the printed word. Now, in fulfillment of this mission, it is our duty to speak the truth about this man who was, in our dark times when genuine Christianity has almost vanished, an embodiment of the life in Christ.

The account is based primarily upon personal acquaintance and upon the testimony of witnesses known to the compilers. Archbishop John throughout is referred to by the term Russians use to speak of and address bishops: *Vladika*. In English this is rendered "Master," but the Russian word, when used by itself, implies a familiarity and endearment that are wanting in the nearest English equivalent. For those who knew him, Archbishop John will always be simply *Vladika*.

ARCHBISHOP JOHN was born on June 4, 1896, in the village of Adamovka in the province of Kharkov in southern Russia. He was a member of the Little-Russian noble family of Maximovitch, to which St. John of Tobolsk also had belonged. His father, Boris, was a marshal of nobility in one part of Kharkov province; and his uncle was rector of Kiev University. He received at baptism the name of Michael, his heavenly protector being the Archangel Michael. He was a sickly child and ate little.

He received his secondary education in the Poltava Military School, which he attended from 1907 to 1914. He loved this school and remembered it fondly in later years. Upon completing military school he entered Kharkov Imperial University in the faculty of law, from which he graduated in 1918, before it was seized by the Soviets. He was then assigned to the Kharkov District Court, where he served at the time Hetman Skoropadsky was ruling the Ukraine and while the Volunteer Army was there.

Kharkov, where Vladika spent his formative years, was a true town of Holy Russia, and the young Michael, impressionable to revelations of holiness, aquired there the pattern of his future life. There were two miraculous Icons of the Mother of God, the *Oseryanskaya* and *Eletskaya*, which were twice a year carried in a religious procession from the monasteries where they were treasured to the Dormition Cathedral. In the Protection Monastery, in a frescoed grotto underneath the altar, lay the remains of the holy *Archbishop Melety Leontovitch*, who after his death in 1841 rendered miraculous help to those who served a panikhida for him at his coffin. Even during his lifetime the Archbishop was venerated for his severe ascetism, especially for the ascetic feat of abstaining from sleep. He was known to spend nights on end standing motionless, with lifted arms, deep in prayer. He foreknew the day and the hour of his own death. The young Maximovitch was known to have a veneration for this holy hierarch.

Today Archbishop John may be seen to resemble the holy man of Kharkov in at least three respects: he was known not to have slept in a bed for forty years; he knew beforehand of his death; and he now rests under a cathedral in a special grave-chapel where panikhidas are sung almost daily and the psalter is read over his coffin by those who ask for his help. This is a unique case of the transplanting, as it were, of a part of Holy Russia to contemporary America.

While at Kharkov University, Vladika spent more time reading the *Lives of Saints* than attending classes; nonetheless he was an exellent

student. Evidently his emulation of saints was apparent even at that age, since Archbishop Anthony of Kharkov, one of the great Church figures of that time (later Metropolitan, first candidate to the Patriarchal See of Moscow, and first Chief Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad) took special pains to become acquainted with him, and then kept the youth close to him and guided his spiritual formation.

In 1921, during the Russian Civil War, Vladika, together with his parents, his brothers, and his sister, was evacuated to Belgrade, where he and his brothers entered the University of Belgrade. One brother graduated in the technical faculty and became an engineer; the other graduated in law and served in the Yugoslav police. Vladika himself graduated in 1925 in the faculty of theology. While he was a student he worked for his living by selling newspapers.

In 1924 Vladika was ordained reader in the Russian church in Belgrade by Metropolitan Anthony, who continued to exert great influence over him; and Vladika in his turn showed the utmost respect and devotion for his superior. In 1926 Metropolitan Anthony tonsured him a monk and ordained him hierodeacon in the Milkov Monastery, giving him the name John, after Vladika's own distant relative, Saint John Maximovitch of Tobolsk. On November 21 of the same year Vladika was ordained hieromonk by Bishop Gabriel of Chelyabinsk.

From 1925 to 1927 Vladika was an instructor of religion at the Serbian State High School, and from 1929 to 1934 he was a teacher and tutor at the Serbian Seminary of St. John the Theologian at Bitol. There he served the Divine Liturgy in Greek for the local Greek and Macedonian communities, who had the greatest esteem for him.

The city of Bitol was in the diocese of Okhrida, and at that time the ruling bishop of this diocese was Nicholas Velimirovitch -- a Serbian Chrysostom, a noted preacher, poet, writer, and organizer and inspirer of the popular religious movement. He, as much as Metropolitan Anthony, valued and loved the young Hieromonk John, and himself exerted a beneficial influence upon him. More than once he was heard to say, "If you wish to see a living saint, go to Bitol to Father John."

For, indeed, it began to become evident that this was an entirely extraordinary man. It was his own students who first discovered what was perhaps Vladika's greatest feat of asceticism. They noticed at first that he stayed up long after everyone else had gone to bed; he would go through the dormitories at night and pick up blankets that had fallen down and cover the unsuspecting sleepers, making the Sign of the Ctoss over them. Finally it was discovered that he scarcely slept at all, and

never in a bed, allowing himself only an hour or two each night of uncomfortable rest in a sitting position, or bent over on the floor praying before icons. Years afterward he himself admitted that since taking the monastic vows he had not slept lying in a bed. Such an ascetic practice is a very rare one; and yet it is not unknown to Orthodox tradition. The great 4th-century founder of coenobitic monasticism, St. Pachomius the Great, when receiving the Rule of monastic communal life from an angel, heard the following concerning sleep: "And they (the monks) shall not take their sleep lying down, but thou shalt make them seats so that when they are sitting down they shall be able to support their heads" (Rule 4).

Archbishop Averky of the Jordanville Holy Trinity Monastery, then a young hieromonk in Carpatho-Russia, was a witness of the deep impression Hieromonk John made upon the seminary students. When they returned home on vacations they would speak of their extraordinary instructor who prayed constantly, served the Divine Liturgy or at least received Holy Communion every day, fasted strictly, never slept lying down, and with true fatherly love inspired them with the high ideals of Christianity and of Holy Russia.[1]

In 1934 it was decided to raise Hieromonk John to the rank of bishop. As for Vladika himself, nothing was farther from his mind. A lady who knew him relates how she met him at this time on a streetcar in Belgrade. He told her that he was in town by mistake, having been sent for in place of some other Hieromonk John who was to be consecrated bishop. When she saw him the next day he informed her that the situation was worse than he had thought: it was *him* they wished to make bishop! When he had protested that this was out of the question, since he had a speech defect and could not enunciate clearly, he had only been told that the Prophet Moses had had the same difficulty.

The consecration occurred on May 28, 1934. Vladika was the last bishop of the very many to be consecrated by Metropolitan Anthony, and the extraordinarily high esteem in which that venerable hierarch held the new bishop is indicated in a letter which he sent to Archbishop Dimitry in the Far East. Himself declining an invitation to retire to China, he wrote: "...But in place of myself, as my soul, as my heart, I am sending you Vladika Bishop John. This little, frail man, looking almost like a child, is in actuality a miracle of ascetic firmness and strictness in our time of total spiritual enfeeblement."[2]

Vladika was assigned to the diocese of Shanghai.

1. *Orthodox Russia*, 1966, no. 14.

2. *Ibid*, 1966, no. 13.

Above: Hieromonk John with a group of his students at the Bitol seminary in Yugoslavia.

Below: Bishop John with Metropolitan Melety of Harbin, 1939.

VLADIKA ARRIVED in Shanghai in late November, on the Feast of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple, and found a large cathedral uncompleted and a jurisdictional conflict to resolve. The first thing he did was to restore Church unity. He established contact with Serbs, Greeks, Ukrainians. He paid special attention to religious education and made it a rule to be present at the oral examinations of the catechism classes in all the Orthodox schools in Shanghai. He at once became a protector of various charitable and philanthropic societies and actively participated in their work, especially after seeing the needy circumstances in which the majority of his flock, refugees from the Soviet Union, were placed. He never went visiting for tea to the rich, but he was to be seen wherever there was need, regardless of time and weather. He organized a home for orphans and the children of needy parents, entrusting it to the heavenly protection of a saint he highly venerated, St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, who loved children. Vladika himself gathered sick and starving children off the streets and dark alleys of Shanghai's slums. Beginning with eight children, the orphanage later housed up to a hundred children at one time, and some 3500 in all. When the Communists came, Vladika evacuated the whole orphanage, first to an island in the Philippines, and then to America.

It soon became apparent to his new flock that Vladika was a great ascetic. The core of his asceticism was prayer and fasting. He ate once a day at 11 p.m. During the first and last weeks of the Great Lent he did not eat at all, and for the rest of this and the Christmas Lent he ate only bread from the altar. His nights he spent usually in prayer, and when he finally became exhausted he would put his head on the floor and steal a few hours of sleep near dawn. When the time would come to serve matins, someone would knock on the door, to no avail; they would open the door and find Vladika huddled on the floor in the icon-corner, overcome by sleep. At a tap on the shoulder he would jump up, and in a few minutes he would be in church for services -- cold water streaming down his beard, but quite awake.

Vladika officiated in the cathedral every morning and evening, even when sick. He celebrated the Divine Liturgy daily, as he was to do for the rest of his life, and if for some reason he could not serve, he would still receive Holy Communion. No matter where he was, he would not miss a service. Once, according to a witness, "Vladika's leg was

ILLUSTRATIONS, OPPOSITE PAGE: Top: Bishop John before the Cathedral in Shanghai, with some of his clergy, and servers from St. Tikhon's Orphanage, about 1946. Bottom, left: Archbishop John's arrival in the Philippines, before the church on Tubabao, 1949. Bottom, right: The Russian Cathedral in Shanghai, dedicated to the Icon 'Warrantor of Sinners.'

terribly swollen and the concilium of doctors, fearing gangrene, prescribed immediate hospitalization, which Vladika categorically refused. Then the Russian doctors informed the Parish Council that they released themselves of any responsibility for the health and even the life of the patient. The members of the Parish Council, after long pleas for mercy and threats of taking him by force, compelled Vladika to agree, and he was sent to the Russian Hospital in the morning of the day before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. By six o'clock, however, Vladika came limping to the cathedral on foot and served In a day all the swelling was gone."[1]

Vladika's constant attention to self mortification had its root in the *fear of God*, which he possessed in the tradition of the ancient Church and of Holy Russia. The following incident, told by O Skopichenko and confirmed by many from Shanghai, well illustrates his daring, unshakable faith in Christ. "A Mrs. Menshikova was bitten by a mad dog. The injections against rabies she either refused to take or took carelessly... And then she came down with this terrible disease. Bishop John found out about it and came to the dying woman. He gave her Holy Communion, but just then she began having one of the fits of this disease; she began to foam at the mouth, and at the same time she spit out the Holy Gifts which she had just received. The Holy Sacrament cannot be thrown out. And Vladika picked up and put in his mouth the Holy Gifts vomited by the sick woman. Those who were with him exclaimed: 'Vladika, what are you doing! Rabies is terribly contagious!' But Vladika peacefully answered: 'Nothing will happen; these are the Holy Gifts.' And indeed nothing did happen."

Vladika wore clothing of the cheapest Chinese fabric, and soft slippers or sandals, always without socks no matter what the weather. He often went barefoot, sometimes after having given his sandals away to some poor man He even served barefoot in church, for which he was severely criticized.

By now it had become known that Vladika not only was a righteous man and an ascetic, but was also so close to God that he was endowed with the gift of clairvoyance and there were healings by his prayers. A striking account told by an eye-witness, Lidia Liu, testifies to Vladika's spiritual height. "Vladika came to Hong Kong twice. It's strange, but I, not knowing Vladika then, wrote him a letter asking him to help a widow wiih children, and I also asked him about some

Continued on page 179

1. G. Larin, in Archimandrite Veniamin's *Recollections of Archbishop John*, Strathfield, Australia, 1966, p. 10.

THE LAST JUDGEMENT

From a talk[1] *by*

ARCHBISHOP JOHN MAXIMOVITCH

THE DAY OF the Last Judgement! That day no one knows -- only God the Father knows -- but its signs are given in the Gospel and in the *Apocalypse* of the holy Apostle John the Theologian. Revelation speaks of the events at the end of the world and of the Last Judgement primarily in images and in a veiled manner, but the Holy Fathers have explained these images, and there is an authentic Church tradition that speaks clearly concerning the signs of the approach of the end, and concerning the Last Judgement.

Before the end of life on earth there will be agitation, wars, civil war, hunger, earthquakes... Men will suffer from fear, will die from expectation of calamity. There will be no life, no joy of life, but a tormented state of falling away from life. But there will be a falling away not only from life, but from faith also, and *when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?* (St. Luke 18:8.) Men will become proud, ungrateful, rejecting Divine law. Together with the falling away from life will be also a weakening of moral life. There will be an exhaustion of good and an increase of evil.

Of these times the holy Apostle John the Theologian speaks in his God-inspired work, the *Apocalypse*. He himself says that he "was in the Spirit" when he wrote it: this means that the Holy Spirit Himself was in him when under the form of various images the fate of the Church and the world was opened to him; and so this is a Divine Revelation.

The *Apocalypse* represents the fate of the Church in the image of a woman who hides herself in those times in the wilderness: she does not show herself in public life; as today in Russia. In public life the leading role will be played by forces which prepare the possibility for the appearance of Antichrist.

1. Translated from *Pravoslavnaya Zhizn*, no. 11, 1966, Jordanville, N.Y.

Antichrist will be a man, and not the devil incarnate. "Anti" means "old," and it also signifies "in place of" or "against." Antichrist is a man who desires to be in place of Christ, to occupy His place and possess what Christ should possess: he desires to possess the attraction of Christ and authority over the whole world. And Antichrist will receive that authority before his destruction and the destruction of the world.

What is known of this man -- Antichrist? His precise ancestry is unknown: his father is completely unknown, and his mother a foul pretended virgin. He will be a Jew of the tribe of Dan. He will be very intelligent and endowed with skill in handling people. He will be fascinating and kind. The philosopher Vladimir Soloviev worked long at presenting the advent and person of Antichrist. He made careful use of all material on this question, not only Patristic but also Moslem, and he worked out a brilliant picture.[1]

Before the advent of Antichrist there is already being prepared in the world the possibility of his appearance: *The mystery of iniquity doth already work* (II Thes. 2: 7). The forces preparing for his appearance fight above all against the lawful Imperial authority. The holy Apostle Paul says that Antichrist cannot be manifested until *what withholdeth* be taken away (II Thes. 2: 6-7). St. John Chrysostom explains that the "withholding one" is the lawful pious authority: such an authority fights with evil. For this reason the "mystery," already at work in the world, fights with this authority; it desires a lawless authority. When the "mystery" decisively achieves that authority, nothing will any longer hinder the appearance of Antichrist.

Fascinating, intelligent, kind, he will be merciful -- he will act with mercy and goodness; but not for the sake of mercy and goodness, but for the strengthening of his authority. And when he will have strenghthened it to the point where the whole world acknowledges him, then he will reveal his face.

For his capital he will choose Jerusalem, because it was here that the Saviour revealed His Divine teaching and His person, and it was here that the entire world was called to the blessedness of goodness and salvation. But the world did not acknowledge Christ and crucified Him in Jerusalem; under Antichrist, however, the whole world will acknowledge his authority, and Jerusalem will become the capital of the world.

Having attained the pinnacle of authority, Antichrist will demand of men the acknowledgement that he has attained what no earthly power

1. Vladimir Soloviev, "A Short Story of Antichrist," in *Three Conversations*, published in 1900, the year of the author's death; English translations exist. (On Soloviev's depiction of Antichrist, see *The Orthodox Word*, vol. 1, no. 5, p. 189.

had ever attained and none can attain, and he will demand worship of himself as a higher being, as a god.

V. Soloviev well describes the character of his activity as "Supreme Ruler." He will do what is pleasing to all -- on the condition of being recognized as Supreme Authority. He will allow the Church to exist, will permit her Divine services, will promise to build magnificent churches -- on the condition that all recognize him as "Supreme Being" and worship him. Antichrist will have a personal hatred for Christ; he will see in Him a rival and look upon Him as a personal enemy. He will live by this hatred and rejoice in men's apostasy from Christ.

Under Antichrist there will be an immense falling away from the faith. Many bishops will change in faith and in justification will point to the brilliant situation of the Church. The search for compromise will be the characteristic disposition of men. Straightforwardness of confession will disappear. Men will cleverly justify their fall, and gracious evil will support such a general disposition. There will be in men the habit of apostasy from truth, and the sweetness of compromise and sin.

Antichrist will allow men everything, as long as they "fall down and worship him"; and the whole world will submit to him. And then there will appear the two righteous men, who will fearlessly preach the faith and accuse Antichrist. According to Church tradition they are the two Prophets of the Old Testament, Elijah and Enoch, who did not taste of death, but will taste it now for three days; and in three days they must rise. Their death will call forth the great rejoicing of Antichrist and his servants. Their resurrection will plunge them into great confusion and terror. And then will come the end of the world.

The Apostle Peter says that the first world was made out of water -- an image of the primordial chaos, and perished by water -- in the Flood. And now the world is *reserved unto fire. The earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up* (II Peter 3: 5-7, 10). All the elements will ignite. This present world will perish in a single instant. In an instant all will be changed.

And the *Sign of the Son of God* will appear: the Sign of the Cross.

The whole world, having willingly submitted to Antichrist, will weep. Everything is finished forever: Antichrist killed; the end of his kingdom of warfare with Christ; the end, and one is held accountable; one must answer to the true God.

"The end of the world" signifies not the annihilation of the world, but its transformation. Everything will be transformed suddenly, in the

twinkling of an eye. The dead will rise in new bodies: their own, but renewed, just as the Saviour rose in His own body and on it were traces of wounds from the nails and spear, yet it possessed new faculties, and in this sense it was a new body. It is not clear whether this new body will be such as that with which Adam was made, or whether it will be an entirely new body.

And the Lord will appear in glory on the clouds. Trumpets will sound, and loud, with power! They will sound in the soul and conscience! All will become clear to the human conscience. The Prophet Daniel, speaking of the Last Judgement, relates how the Ancient of days, the Judge, sits on His throne, and before Him is a fiery stream (Daniel 7: 9-10). Fire is a purifying element; it burns sin. Woe to a man if sin has become a part of his nature: then the fire will burn the man himself.

This fire will be kindled within a man: seeing the Cross, some will rejoice, but others will fall into confusion, terror, and despair. Thus will men be divided instantly. The very state of a man's soul casts him to one side or the other, to right or to left.

The more consciously and persistently a man strives toward God in his life, the greater will be his joy when he hears: "Come unto Me, ye blessed." And conversely: the same words will call the fire of horror and torture on those who did not desire Him, who fled and fought or blasphemed Him during their lifetime!

The Last Judgement knows of no witnesses or written protocols! Everything is inscribed in the souls of men and these records, these "books," are opened at the Judgement. Everything becomes clear to all and to oneself.

And some will go to joy, while others -- to horror.

When "the books are opened," it will become clear that the roots of all vices lie in the human soul. Here is a drunkard or a lecher: when the body has died, some may think that sin is dead too. No! There was an inclination to sin in the soul, and that sin was sweet to the soul, and if the soul has not repented of the sin and has not freed itself from it, it will come to the Last Judgement also with the same desire for sin. It will never satisfy that desire and in that soul there will be the suffering of hatred. It will accuse everyone and everything in its tortured condition, it will hate everyone and everything. "There will be gnashing of teeth" of powerless malice and the unquenchable fire of hatred.

A "fiery gehenna" -- such is the inner fire. "Here there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Such is the state of hell.

personal spiritual matter, but I never received an answer. A year passed. Vladika came to Hong Kong and I was in a crowd that went to meet him in church. Vladika turned to me and said, 'It is you who wrote me the letter!' I was astonished, since Vladika had never seen me before.

"A moleben was sung, after which Vladika, standing before a lectern, was delivering a sermon. I was standing next to my mother, and we both saw a light surrounding Vladika down to the lectern -- a radiance around him a foot wide. This lasted a rather long time. When the sermon was over I, struck by such an unusual phenomenon, told what we had seen to R. V. S., who told us: 'Yes, many faithful saw it.' My husband, who was standing a little way off, also saw this light."

Vladika loved to visit the sick and did it every single day, hearing confessions and giving Holy Communion. If the condition of a patient should become critical, Vladika would go to him at any hour of the day or night to pray at his bedside. Here is one undoubted miracle among the many worked by Vladika's prayers; it was recorded and placed in the archives of the County Hospital in Shanghai. (Source: N. Makovaya.)

"L. D. Sadkovskaya was very much taken by the sport of horse-racing. Once she was thrown off her horse; she hit her head on a rock and lost consciousness. She was brought to the hospital unconscious. A concilium of doctors agreed that her condition was hopeless and it was not likely that she would live until morning. The pulse was almost gone; the skull was fractured in places so that small pieces of the skull were pressing on the brain. In such a condition she would die on the operating table. Even if her heart would tolerate surgery and the result were successful, she would still remain deaf, dumb, and blind.

"Her sister, after hearing all this, rushed to Bishop John in despair and begged him to save her sister. Vladika agreed: he came to the hospital and asked everyone to leave the room and prayed there for about two hours. Then he called the chief doctor and asked him to examine her again. How surprised the doctor was to discover that her pulse was normal! He agreed to perform the operation immediately, but only in the presence of Bishop John. The operation was successful, and the doctors were amazed when, after the operation, the patient regained consciousness and asked to drink. She can see and hear perfectly. She is still living and can talk, see, and hear. I have known her for thirty years."

Vladika visited the prison also, and celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the convicts on a primitive little table. But the most difficult task for a pastor is to visit the mentally ill and the possessed -- and Vladika sharply distinguished between the two. Outside Shanghai there was a

mental hospital, and Vladika alone had the spiritual power to visit these terribly sick people. He gave them Holy Communion, and they, surprisingly, received it peacefully and listened to him. They always looked forward to his visits and met him with joy.

Vladika possessed great courage. During the Japanese occupation the Japanese authorities tried in every way possible to bend the Russian colony to their will. Pressure was directed through the heads of the Russian Emigrant Committee. Two presidents of this Committee strove to maintain its independence, and as a result both were killed. Confusion and terror seized the Russian colony, and at that moment Vladika John, in spite of warnings from the Russians who were collaborating with the Japanese, declared himself the temporary head of the Russian colony.

During the Japanese occupation it was extremely dangerous to walk on the streets at night, and most people took care to be home by dark. Vladika, however, paying no heed to the danger, continued to visit the sick and needy at any hour of the night, and he was never touched.

At the end of the war persuasion and pressure were brought to bear on Russian clergy everywhere to submit to the newly-elected "Patriarch" of the Soviet Church. Of the six hierarchs in the Far East, five submitted; only Bishop John, resisting all persuasion and threats, remained loyal to the Russian Church Abroad. In 1946 he was raised to the rank of Archbishop over all the Russian faithful in China.

With the coming of the Communists, the Russians in China were forced once again to flee, most of them through the Philippine Islands. In 1949 approximately 5000 refugees from the Chinese mainland were living in an International Refugee Organization camp on the island of Tubabao in the Philippines. This island is located in the path of the seasonal typhoons which sweep through that part of the Pacific. During the 27-month period of the camp's occupancy, the island was threatened only once by a typhoon, and it changed course and bypassed the island.

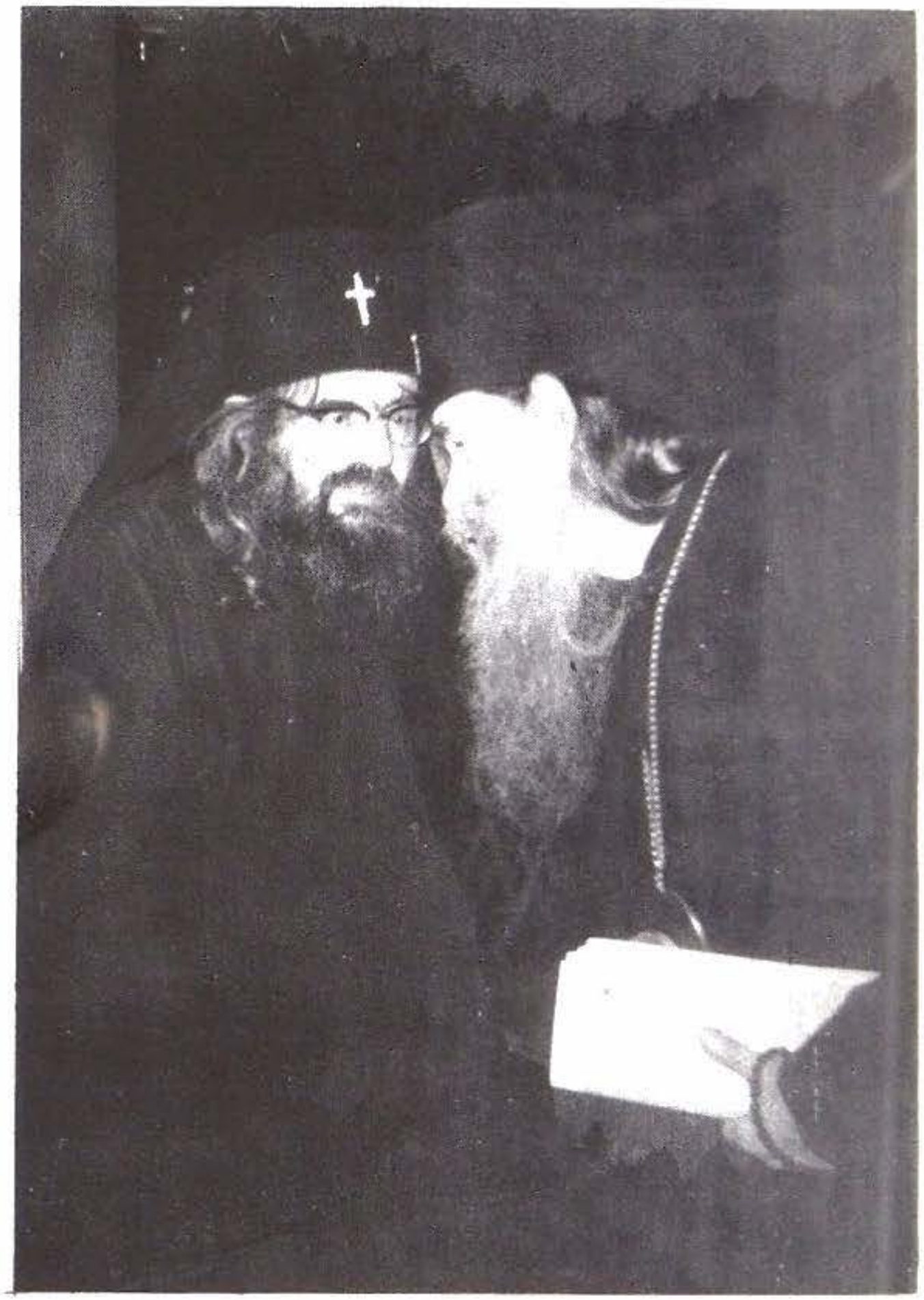
When the fear of typhoons was mentioned by one Russian to the Filopinos, they replied that there was no reason to worry, because "your holy man blesses your camp from four directions every night." They referred to Vladika John; for no typhoon struck the island while he was there. After the camp had been almost totally evacuated and the people resettled elsewhere (mainly in the U.S.A. and Australia), and only about 200 persons were left on the island, it was struck by a terrible typhoon that totally destroyed the camp.

Vladika himself went to Washington, D. C., to get his people to America. Legislation was changed and almost the whole camp came to the New World -- thanks again to Vladika.

Right: Memorial Church, Brussels, completed under the episcopate of Archbishop John.

Above: Archbishop John celebrating a panikhida in Brussels.

Right: Archbishop John with Archbishop Tikhon, his life-long friend and predecessor in the San Francisco cathedra.



ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ
ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΒΟΣΚΡΕΣΕ
CHRIST HAS RISEN

THE EXODUS of his flock from China accomplished, Archbishop John was given in 1951 a new field for his pastoral endeavor: he was sent by the Synod of Bishops to the archdiocese of Western Europe, with his see first in Paris, and later in Brussels. He was now one of the leading hierarchs of the Russian Church, and his attendance was frequently required at the sessions of the Synod in New York City.

In Western Europe Vladika took a deep interest not only in the Russians in diaspora, for whom he exerted himself tirelessly in labors similar to those for which he had been known in Shanghai,-- but also in the local inhabitants. He received under his jurisdiction local Dutch and French Orthodox Churches, protecting them and encouraging their Orthodox development. He celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Dutch and French, as before he had served in Greek and Chinese, and as later he was to serve in English.

Vladika's interest in and devotion to the Church's saints, of whom his knowledge was already seemingly limitless, was extended now to Western European saints dating from before the schism of the Latin Church, many of whom, venerated only locally, were included in no Orthodox calendar of saints. He collected their Lives and images of them, and later submitted a long list of them to the Synod.

In Western Europe as in China people learned to expect the unexpected of Vladika; for here he continued to base his life upon the law of God, thinking nothing of the inconvenience or surprise this might sometimes occasion in those who are governed chiefly by the standards of men. Once Vladika chanced to be in Marseilles, and he decided to serve a panikhida on the site of the cruel assassination of King Alexander of Serbia. None of his clergy, out of false shame, wished to serve with Vladika. Indeed, what a thing to do -- to serve in the middle of the street! So Vladika went alone. The citizens of Marseilles were amazed to see a clergyman in unusual dress, with long hair and a beard, walking with a suitcase and a broom in the middle of the street. News photographers caught sight of him and photographed him. Finally he stopped, swept with the broom a small portion of the pavement, opened

ILLUSTRATIONS, OPPOSITE PAGE: Top: The ceremony of the raising of the crosses atop the new Holy Virgin Cathedral in San Francisco, 1964, which was preceded by a solemn procession through the streets. The attending hierarchs are (l-r) Bp. Sava of Edmonton, Metrop Philaret, Archbp. John, Bp. Nektary of Seattle.

Bottom, left: Archbp. John giving a sermon in New York City several years before his death.

Bottom, right: Holy Virgin Cathedral in San Francisco, Easter, 1965.

his suitcase and began taking out its contents. On the swept spot he put a pontifical eagle-rug, lit the censer, and began to serve a panikhida.

Vladika's reputation for holiness, too, spread among the non-Orthodox as well as the Orthodox population. In one of the Catholic churches of Paris, a priest strove to inspire his young people with these words: "You demand proofs, you say that now there are neither miracles nor saints. Why should I give you theoretical proofs, when today there walks in the streets of Paris a saint -- *Saint Jean Nus Pieds* (Saint John the Barefoot)." Many people testify to the miracles worked by the prayers of Archbishop John in Western Europe.

IN SAN FRANCISCO, whose cathedral parish is the largest in the Russian Church Abroad, a life-long friend of Vladika, Archbishop Tikhon, retired because of ill-health, and in his absence the construction of a great new cathedral came to a halt as a bitter dispute paralyzed the Russian community. In response to the urgent request of thousands of Russians in San Francisco who had known him in Shanghai, Archbishop John was sent by the Synod in 1962 as the only hierarch likely to restore peace in the divided community. He arrived at his last assignment as bishop twenty-eight years to the day after his first arrival in Shanghai: on the Feast of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple, November 21 (December 4), 1962.

Under Vladika's guidance a measure of peace was restored, the paralysis of the community was ended, and the cathedral finished. Yet even in the role of peacemaker Vladika was attacked, and accusations and slanders were heaped upon his head. He was forced to appear in public court -- in flagrant violation of Church canons -- to answer to preposterous charges of concealing financial dishonesty by the Parish Council. All involved were completely exonerated; but thus Vladika's last years were filled with the bitterness of slander and persecution, to which he unfailingly replied without complaint, without judging anyone, with undisturbed peacefulness.

Vladika remained true to the end to his path of faithful service to the Church. To those who knew him in his last years perhaps two aspects of his character stood out. First was his strictness in what regarded the Church and the law of God. He insisted on the proper deportment of Church servers, allowing no levity, or even talking, in the altar. Himself an expert in Divine services, he would correct errors and omissions in the order of service immediately. With the congregation,

too, he was strict, allowing no women to kiss the Cross or icons while wearing lipstick, and requiring that the antidoron distributed at the end of the Liturgy be received fasting. He spoke against the desecration of the eves of Sundays and feast days by the organization of balls and other entertainments on them. He staunchly defended the Church (Julian) Calendar against new-calendar innovators. He forbade his clergy to participate in "Pan-Orthodox" services because of the dubious canonicity of some participants; and the activities of Orthodox "ecumenists" caused him to shake his head in disbelief. He was strictest of all with regard to the holy doctrine of Orthodoxy; while he was still a young bishop in Shanghai his critical essay on the "Sophiology" of Archpriest S. N. Bulgakov was instrumental in the Synod's condemnation of the latter's heresy in 1936.[1] No one who has seen will soon forget Vladika's fierce look while lowering the pontifical candlesticks at the proclamation of the *Anathemas* against heretics on the Sunday of Orthodoxy -- here he was one with the Church in excluding from her bosom all who reject the full and saving Orthodox faith. All this was not from any narrow-minded literalness or "fanaticism," but from the same *fear of God* which Vladika preserved his whole life long, and which prohibits one from trespassing against God's law at the peril of one's salvation.

A recent example of Vladika's righteous severity invites comparison with an incident from the life of Vladika's beloved St Tikhon Zadonsky, who rode into the midst of a pagan celebration held during the Apostles' Fast and delivered a heated accusing sermon against the participants.[2] On the evening before October 19 (Nov. 1), 1964, the Russian Church Abroad celebrated the solemn canonization of Father John of Kronstadt, whom Vladika greatly venerated, taking an active part in the compiling of the service and acathist to him. The Latins celebrate on this day the feast of All Saints, and there is a tradition that during the preceding night the dark spirits celebrate their own festival of disorder. In America this "Halloween" has become an occasion on which children make mischief dressed in costumes of witches, devils, ghosts, as if calling on the dark powers -- a diabolic mockery of Christianity.

A group of Russians organized on this night (which was also the eve of Sunday) a Halloween Ball. In the San Francisco Cathedral at the time of the first All-night Vigil celebrated to St. John of Kronstadt, a number of people were absent, to the great sorrow of Vladika. After the service Vladika went to the place where the ball was still in progress.

1. See Archbishop Nikon Rklitsky's biography of Metropolitan Anthony, vol. 7, p. 371.
2. See *The Orthodox Word*, vol. 2, no. 3, p. 87.

He climbed the steps and entered the hall, to the absolute astonishment of the participants. The music stopped and Vladika, in complete silence, glared at the dumbfounded people, slowly and deliberately making the round of the entire hall, staff in hand. He spoke not a word, and none was necessary; the mere sight of Vladika stung the conscience of all, as was evident from the general consternation. Vladika left in silence; and the next day in church he thundered his holy indignation and his flaming zeal calling all to the devout Christian life.

Yet Vladika is not best remembered by his flock for his sternness, but rather for his gentleness, his joyfulness, even for what is known as "foolishness for Christ's sake." The most popular photograph of him (opposite page) captures something of this aspect of his character It was especially noticeable in his conduct with children. After services he would smile and joke with the boys who served with him, playfully knocking the refractory on the head with his staff. Occasionally the Cathedral clergy would be disconcerted to see Vladika, in the middle of a service (though never in the altar), bend over to play with a small child! And on feast days when blessing with holy water was called for, he would sprinkle the faithful, not on the top of the head as is usual, but right in the face (which once led a small girl to exclaim, "he *squirts* you"), with a noticeable glint in his eye and total unconcern at the discomfiture of some of the more dignified. Children were absolutely devoted to him, despite his usual strictness with them.

Vladika was sometimes criticized for upsetting the usual order of things. He was often late for services (never on his own account, but because he had been visiting the sick or dying), and he would not allow them to begin without him; and when he celebrated the services would be quite long, as he allowed few of the standard abbreviations. He would appear at various places unannounced and at unexpected times; often he would visit hospitals late at night -- and always be admitted. At times his judgements would seem to clash with common sense, and his actions would seem strange; and often he would not explain them.

No man is perfect; Vladika was sometimes wrong (and he did not hesitate to admit it when he found out). But usually he was right, and the seeming strangeness of some of his actions and judgements could later be seen to fit into a different pattern of things. Vladika's life was governed by the standards of the spiritual life, and if this upset the routine order of things it was in order to jolt people out of their spiritual inertia and remind them that there is a higher judgement than the world's.

A remarkable incident from Vladika's years in San Francisco(1963) illustrates several aspects of his holiness: his spiritual boldness based on

The most popular portrait of Archbishop John, representing him as he is most fondly remembered by those who knew him.

absolute faith; his ability to see the future and to overcome by his spiritual sight the bounds of space; and the power of his prayer, which beyond all doubt worked miracles. The incident is related by the woman who witnessed it, Mrs. L. Liu; the exact words of Vladika were confirmed by the Mr. T. who is mentioned.

"In San Francisco my husband was involved in an automobile accident and was seriously injured; he lost control of balance and suffered terribly. At this time Vladika had many troubles. Knowing the power of Vladika's prayers, I thought: if I ask Vladika to come to my husband, my husband would recover; but I was afraid to do this because Vladika was so busy then. Two days passed, and suddenly Vladika came to us, accompanied by Mr. B. T., who had driven him. Vladika stayed with us about five minutes, but I believed that my husband would recover. The state of his health was at its most serious point then, and after Vladika's visit there was a sharp crisis and then he began to recover and lived four more years after this. He was quite aged. Afterwards I met Mr. T. at a Church meeting and he told me that he had been driving Vladika to the airport. Suddenly Vladika had said to him: 'Let's go now to the Lius.' He had objected that they would be late for the plane and that he could not turn around at that moment. Then Vladika had said: 'Can you take the life of a man upon yourself?' He could do nothing but drive Vladika to us. Vladika, as it turned out, was not late for the plane, because they had held it up for him."

With the announcement by Metropolitan Anastassy in 1964 of his retirement, Archbishop John became a leading candidate to succeed him as Metropolitan and Chief Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad. On the second ballot he was one of the two candidates, with the difference of a single vote between them. To resolve the equal division of the bishops, that night Vladika asked the youngest of the hierarchs, Bishop Philaret, to his quarters, and there he persuaded this unexpected candidate to accept the awesome responsibility of this office. The next day he withdrew his own candidacy and recommended the election of Bishop Philaret, whom the bishops elected unanimously, seeing in this sudden turn of events the grace of the Holy Spirit.

To such eminence among the hierarchs of the Russian Church was Vladika raised before the end of his earthly life. It was an eminence based not on any external qualities, for Vladika was frail, bent, without ambition or guile, unable even to speak clearly. It was an eminence based solely on those inner, spiritual qualities which made of him unquestionably one of the great Orthodox hierarchs of this century, and a holy man. In him, righteousness shone.

AMONG THOSE who knew and loved Vladika, the first response to the news of his sudden death was: it cannot be! And this was more than a reaction to the suddenness of the event; for among those who were close to him there had unaccountably developed the notion that this pillar of the Church, this holy man who was always accessible to his flock -- would never cease to be! There would never be a time when one would not be able to turn to him for advice and consolation! In one sense, in a spiritual sense, this has since turned out to be true. But it is also one of the realities of this world that every man who lives must die.

Vladika was prepared for this reality. While others expected of him many more years of fruitful service to the Church of Christ -- for he was a relatively young hierarch -- he was readying himself for an end which he had foreseen at least for some months, and the very day of which he apparently knew in advance.

To the manager of the orphanage where he lived, who had spoken in the spring of 1966 of a diocesan meeting to be held three years later, he indicated, "I will not be here then." In May, 1966, a woman who had known Vladika for twelve years -- and whose testimony, according to Metropolitan Philaret, is "worthy of complete confidence" -- was amazed to hear him say, "I will die soon, at the end of June... not in San Francisco, but in Seattle..." Metropolitan Philaret himself testifies of Vladika's extraordinary final farewell to him when returning to San Francisco from the last session of the Synod which he attended in New York. After the Metropolitan had served the customary moleben before traveling, Vladika, instead of sprinkling his own head with holy water, as is always done by hierarchs, bent low and asked the Metropolitan to sprinkle him; and after this, instead of the usual mutual kissing of hands, Vladika firmly took the Metropolitan's hand and kissed it, withdrawing his own.[1]

Again, on the evening before his departure for Seattle, four days before his death, Vladika astonished a man for whom he had just served a moleben with the words, "You will not kiss my hand again." And on the day of his death, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy which he celebrated, he spent three hours in the altar praying, emerging not long before his death, which occurred at 3:50 p.m. on July 2 (June 19, OS), 1966. He died in his room in the parish building next to the church, without preparatory signs of any illness or affliction. He was heard to fall and, having been placed in a chair by those who ran to help him,

1. The last two incidents from *Orthodox Russia*, 1966, no. 18.

breathed his last peacefully and with little evident pain, in the presence of the miraculous Kursk Icon of the Sign. Thus was Vladika found worthy to imitate the blessed death of his patron, St. John of Tobolsk.

The events of the days that followed, culminating in the funeral and burial on Thursday, July 7 (June 24), have been described elsewhere. [1] They were days of exaltation and triumph such as accompany the burial, or the uncovering of the holy relics, of a hierarch-saint.

Today Archbishop John reposes in a chapel in the basement of the San Francisco cathedral; and there a new chapter has begun in the story of this holy man. Just as St. Seraphim of Sarov told his spiritual children to regard him as living after his death, and to come to his grave and tell him what was in their hearts, so our Vladika also has proved to be hearing those who revere his memory. Soon after his death a one-time student of his, Fr. Amvrossy P., saw one night a dream (or a vision, he could not tell which): Vladika, clad in Easter vestments, full of light and shining, was censing the cathedral and joyfully uttered to him just one word while blessing him: "happy."

Later, before the end of the forty-day period, Fr. Constantine Z., long Vladika's deacon and now a priest, who had lately been angry at Vladika and began to doubt his righteousness, saw Vladika in a dream all in light, with rays of light shining around his head so brightly that it was impossible to look at them. Thus were Fr. Constantine's doubts of Vladika's holiness dispelled.

Many others have seen Archbishop John in unusual dreams that have a particular significance or message. Some affirm that supernatural help has been granted them. The modest grave-chapel, soon to be adorned with icons by Pimen Sofronov in remembrance of Vladika, is the witness already of how many tears, confessions, heartfelt requests...

The manager of the St. Tikhon Zadonsky Home and long a devoted servant of Vladika, M. A. Shakhmatova, saw a remarkable dream. A crowd of people carried Vladika in a coffin into St. Tikhon's Church; Vladika came to life and stood in the royal doors anointing the people and saying to her, "Tell the people: although I have died, I am alive!"

It is yet too early to be able even to grasp the fact that we, cold and sinful, living in this evil age, have been witnesses of such a glorious phenomenon -- the life and death of a saint! It is as if the times of Holy Russia have returned to earth, as if to prove the fact that *Jesus Christ* is *the same yesterday, and today, and forever* (Hebrews 13: 8). Amen.

1. See *The Orthodox Word*, vol, 2, no. 3, pp. 108ff.

THE MIRACLES OF FATHER HERMAN OF ALASKA

"Alaska's Saint," Father Herman, has not yet been canonized, but his sanctity has been evidenced by the miracles he has performed since his death in 1837. One of these is attested by the great Alaska missionary, later Metropolitan of Moscow, Innocent Veniaminov

A RESCUE AT SEA

1842

IN I. BARSUKOV'S thorough biography of Metropolitan Innocent Veniaminov, the latter's daughter Catherine I. Petelin describes the situation preceding the miracle of Father Herman's intercession thus:

"For five days we were sailing to Spruce Island; the wind was favorable. At night prior to the fifth day all of a sudden everybody on the ship felt a strong tremor and rocking; and all were terrified. Bishop Innocent and the ship's captain came out on the deck at 11 p.m. to find out what was the matter, but there was nothing noticeable. The wind was blowing as before: favorable and even. They asked the boatswain and the pilot what it meant; they answered that a big change should be expected. Then the bishop and the captain understood that it was an earthquake, although it did not last long, for a minute or two only. And then, indeed, opposing winds began to blow, strong and freezing; the sea began to spray foam and bluster, the storm shook and tossed the vessel. One wave after another furiously hurled themselves against the ship, gushing across the deck. The passengers hid themselves in the hold and cabins. The ship was not a large one, but it carried seventy passengers aboard. All the hatches were hammered tight. Only the crew remained above with their captain and the bishop. The rest of the passengers remained without daylight in the hold sitting by candle-light;

for twenty-eight days and nights the leaky boat was drifting on the waves, rocking so hard that it was impossible to walk, so that the people were crowded together in a sitting position for days on end, and everyone's legs were sore. To endure twenty-eight days in a sitting position and in absolute darkness, and at that almost without food and drink, was extremely hard... There also was not even dry bread, only some dust from it remained. Water also was scarce; only a half bottle of it was given out to four persons to last for twenty-four hours. At last there was no more water, and then we would squeeze water out of the sails and drink it. The salt meat was boiled in sea-water and distributed among passengers in small pieces. Everyone became ill..."[1]

Here is how the blessed Archbishop Innocent himself describes the event, in a letter to the Abbot of Valaam Monastery Damascene from Blagoveshchensk town, dated March 1, 1867:

"In 1842, while sailing to Kodiak, we were a long time[2] at sea and found ourselves in such desperate straits that we were left with less than half a barrel of water for fifty-two passengers. And in front of the entrance to Kodiak harbor we encountered an adverse wind that kept up constantly for three days and nights. Our boat went back and forth (or in sailors' language, tacked) between the southern cape of Kodiak and Spruce Island, where Father Herman lived and died. Towards evening on the third day, when our boat was approaching Spruce Island again (for perhaps the twentieth or thirtieth time), I glanced at it and said mentally: 'If you, Father Herman, have pleased God, then let the wind change.' And indeed, it must have been no more than a quarter of an hour before the wind became suddenly favorable, and the very same evening we entered the bay and cast anchor. We did not serve a moleben right then, however. A little later I went to the grave and served a panikhida for the dead -- but without seeing any kind of vision.

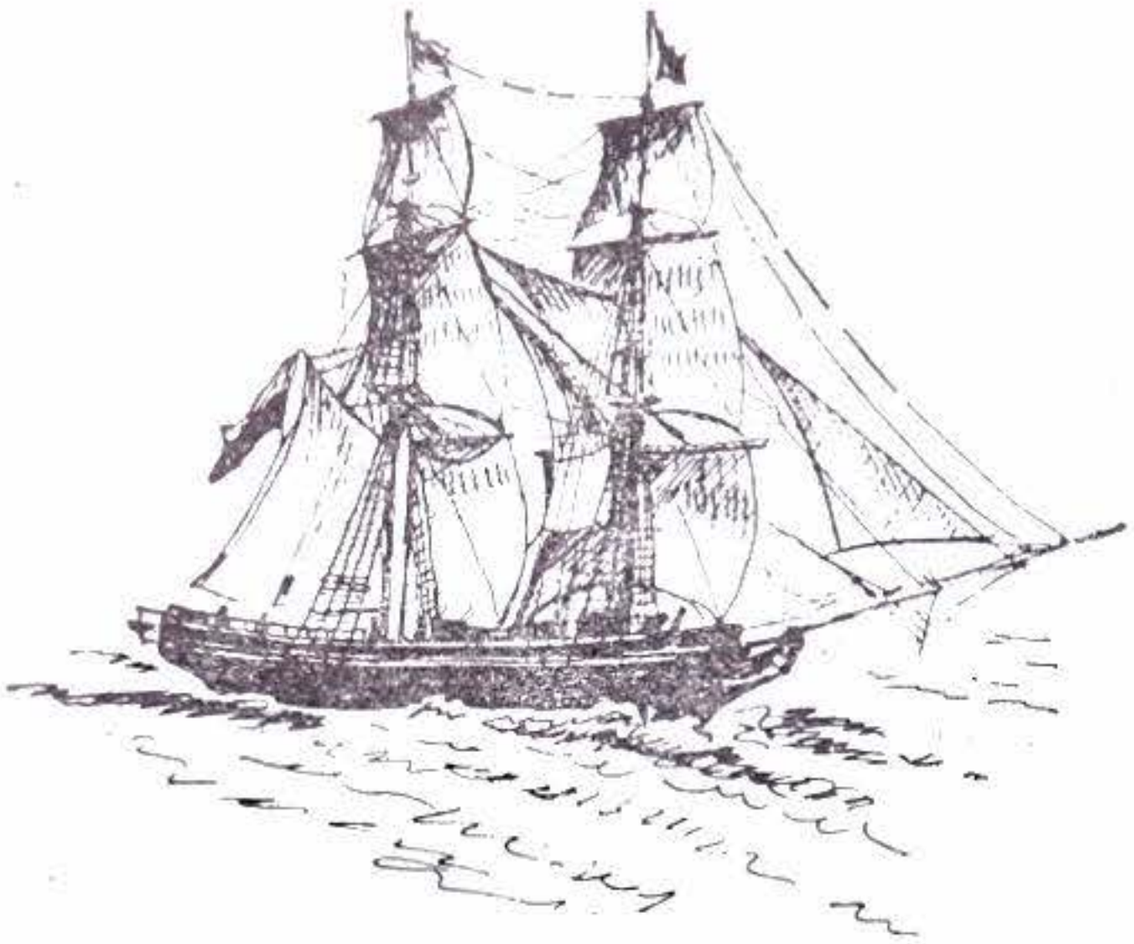
"More than this I know nothing, and I have heard nothing similar from anyone concerning Father Herman.

"And so, committing myself to your prayers, I have the honor to be, with sincere brotherly love in the Lord,

"The well-wishing servant of Your Eminent Holiness,

Innocent, Archbishop of Kamchatka."

1. Ivan Barsukov, *Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna*, Moscow, 1883, p. 171.
2. Twenty-eight days, as another letter of Archbishop Innocent specifies.



A PILGRIMAGE TO THE ORTHODOX HOLY PLACES OF AMERICA

THE FOURTH PILGRIMAGE

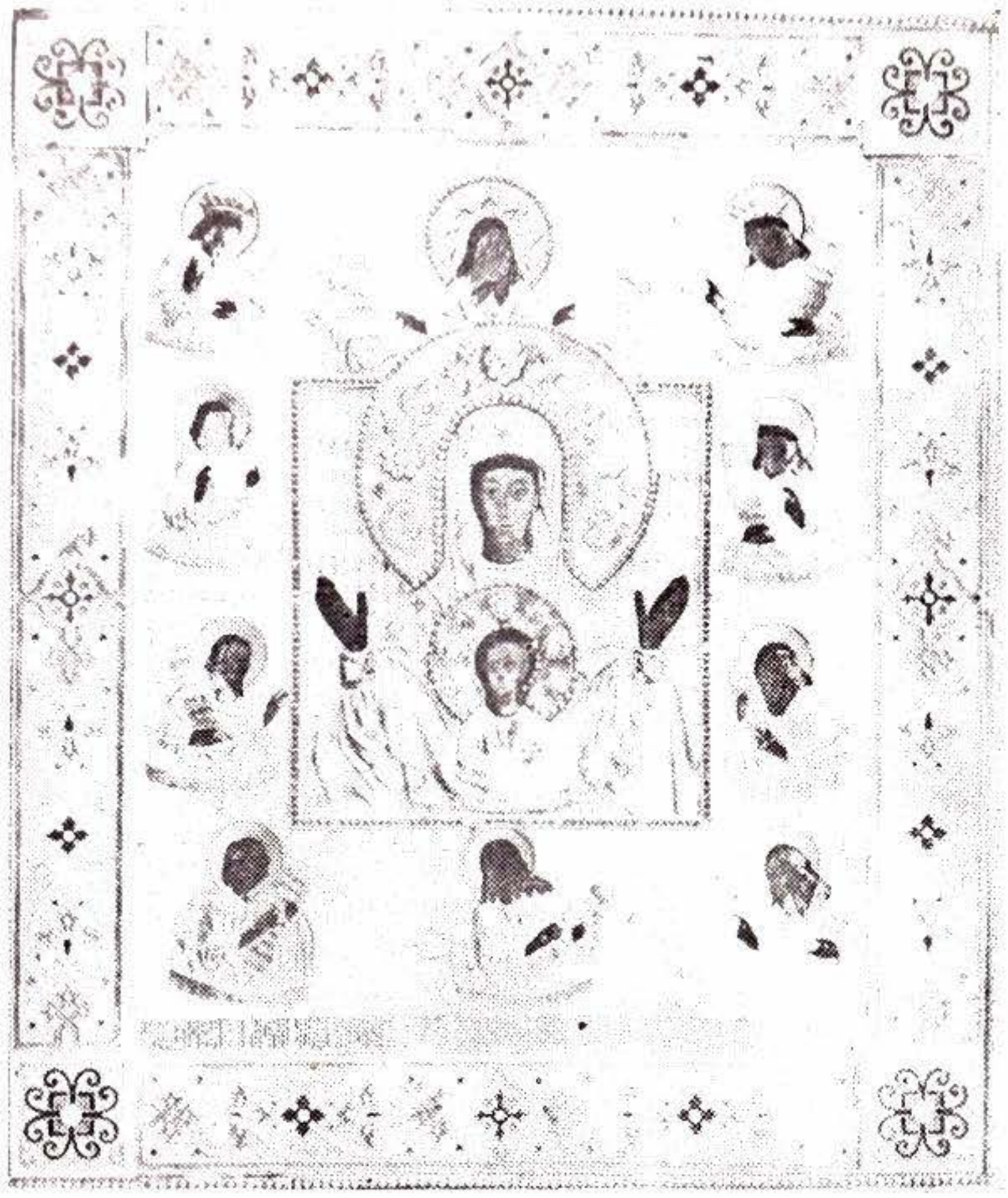
ONE OF THE MOST VENERATED holy miracle-working icons of the Russian land is the Kursk Icon of the Mother of God. It was guarded and treasured for over seven centuries in central Russia, until shortly after the Revolution, when the Icon came to bestow its miracles upon the Western world.

Through Her sacred Icon the Mother of God is almost all the time traveling, visiting the homes of believers, hearing the pleas of the afflicted, the sorrowful, the sick... The faithful, just as before in Holy Russia, receive the visitation of the Most Holy Theotokos with fear and reverence, singing and prostrating themselves before it as it is carried over their heads... A large number of evident miraculous intercessions from the Icon has been recorded, and the list perpetually increases.

The home shrine of the Icon is a modest little hermitage in the vicinity of a picturesque lake just forty miles north of New York City on Route 6. It nestles at the foot of a hill between two peaceful towns -- Carmel, and Mahopac, the latter named after a local Indian tribe.

The monastery, formerly an estate of the Grand Prince S. Belosel-sky-Belosersky, has an air of Russia's northern sketes, with the white archway for a gate, a primitive wooden belfry, a secluded shady graveyard, a pond... Inside the church an air of Ancient Russ predominates, with stern-looking dark icons, the work of Fr. Dimitry Alexandrov, an authority on Orthodox ecclesiastical arts and crafts as well as a masterful icon-painter.

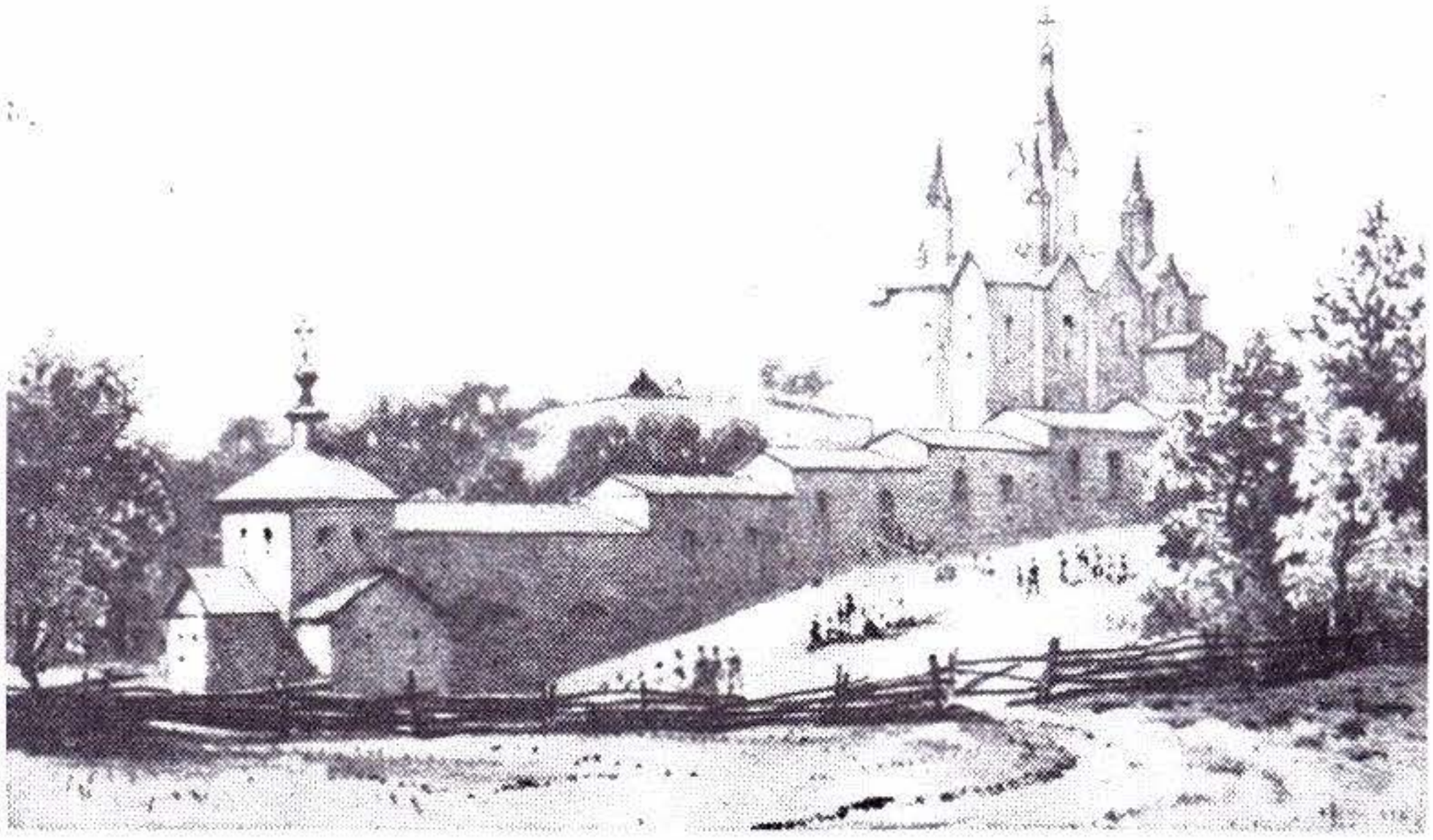
The Hermitage treasures a great number of relics of many major saints in small reliquaries brought from Mt. Athos and the Holy Land.



NEW KURSK ICON HERMITAGE

NEAR LAKE MAHOPAC, NEW YORK

IN THE YEAR of our Lord Jesus Christ 1295, on the eighth of September, the Feast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God, a devout villager chanced to come to a riverbank in a forest not far from the town of Kursk in central Russia - and discovered an Icon of the Sign of the Mother of God lying on the root of a large tree. And as he took the Icon in his hands, on the spot where the sacred image had lain, there appeared a spring whose waters worked miracles. Soon the Icon itself became known for a multitude of miracles, and it inspired a perpetual flow of pilgrims. At the place where the Icon had been found a chapel was subsequently erected, then a church, and finally a monastery. The latter, preserving the miraculous Icon, was destined to be the living witness to God's mercies granted through the Icon. It endured the Tartar yoke, but the Communist yoke was less tolerable and the holy image chose to leave the old Kursk Hermitage and go as the *Hodigitria* of the Russian diaspora, the guide for Orthodox faithful on the path of exile, producing on its way to the West a multitude of miraculous healings of the afflicted, the needy, the sorrowful, the homeless.



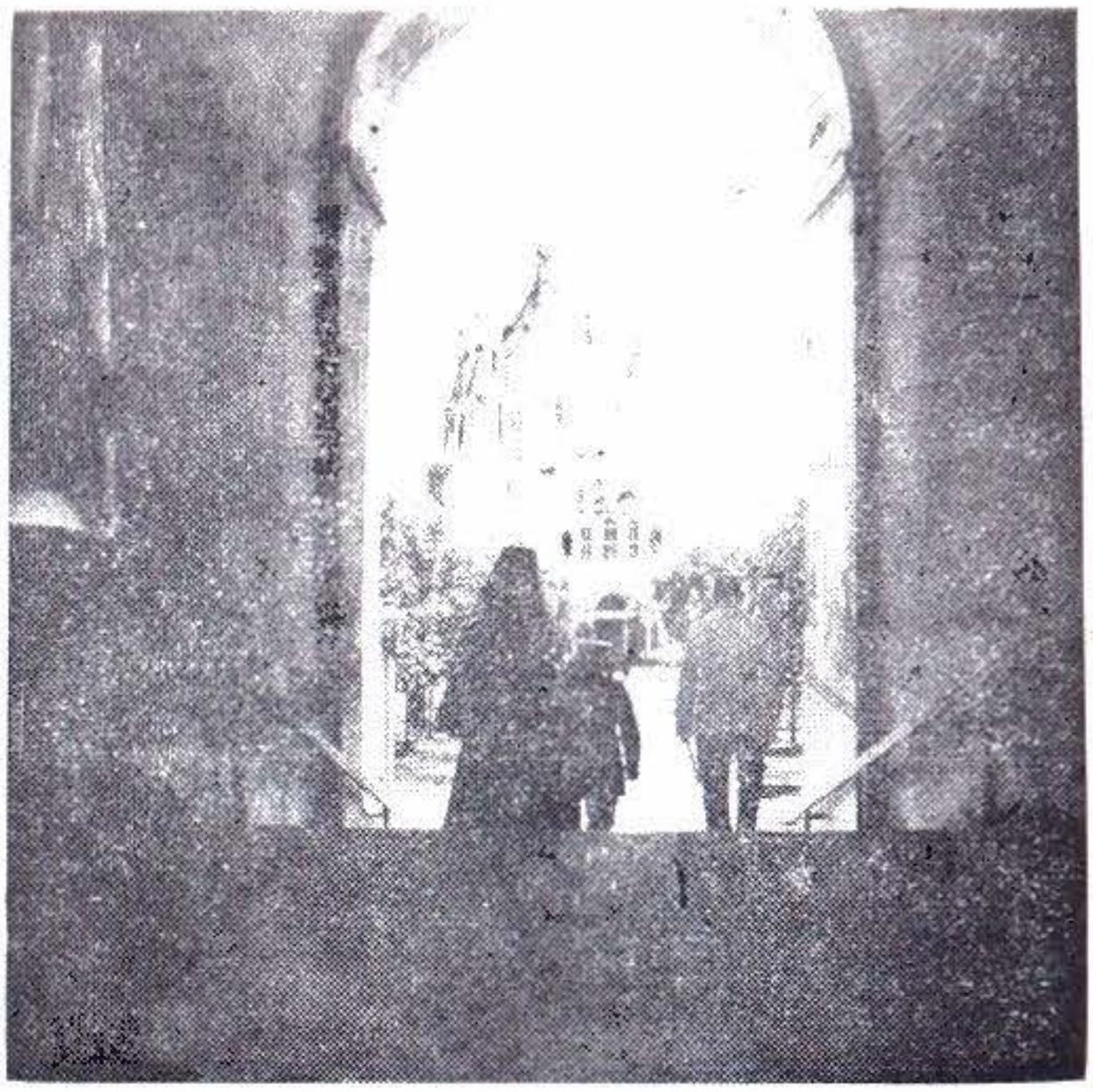
At length it reached the New World, and it is treasured today in its New Hermitage, which was especially erected for the Icon.[1]

1. All information taken from the book on the Icon, *Hodigitria of the Russian Diaspora* (in Russian), by Archbishop Seraphim of Chicago, New Kursk Icon Hermitage, 1963 (second edition).

19th-CENTURY ENGRAVINGS:

1. The Old Kursk Icon Hermitage showing the famed covered steps leading from the church built over the miraculous spring up to the main cathedral on the hilltop.

2. A typical scene inside the church, showing pilgrims coming to partake of the miraculous water.



Above: The Old Kursk Icon Hermitage bell tower at the end of the drive to the main gate

Right: Main Cathedral of the Old Kursk Hermitage, as seen through the main gate. Both photographs are from before the Revolution.

Below right: The New Kursk Icon Hermitage: arch leading to the church entrance The traditional welcoming inscription above the gate reads in Slavonic script:
BLESSED IS HE WHO COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.

WITH the departure of the holy Icon the story of the Old Kursk Hermitage ceases: its churches were destroyed, the Life-giving spring was filled, and the monastery was turned into a military training ground. The short story of the New Kursk Hermitage began when the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, having become established in New York City, was preparing to receive the holy Icon. Archbishop

The monastery chapel and the main building.

Right: Archimandrite Innocent, the Abbot of the Hermitage, inside the chapel.

Seraphim of Chicago was assigned to establish a suitable abode for the Icon, and thus he founded the Hermitage in 1950 as the home of the holy Icon whenever it is away from New York City, and as a suburban residence for Metropolitan Anastassy. An exact copy of the Icon, itself miracle working, is permanently there.

The brotherhood is not a large one; presently there are three monks.

A fuller account of the Icon will be presented in *the Orthodox Word* in due time.

Next issue: A Pilgrimage to Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Boston, Massachussetts.

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